

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03
NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00
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-----108718 161738Z /45

O R 161646Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY LISBON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6715
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMCONSUL OPORTO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USNATO
DIA WASH DC
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
USNMR SHAPE BEL
COMUSFORAZ

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 6101

BRUSSELS ALSO FOR USEEC

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3
TAGS: PINT PO
SUBJ: PRIME MINISTER-DESIGNATE CONTINUES TO PUSH AHEAD

REF: LISBON 6050 (DTG 141704Z AUG 78)

SUMMARY. PRIME MINISTER-DESIGNATE NOBRE DA COSTA MAY ANNOUNCE
SOME OF HIS CABINET CHOICES AUGUST 17. CDS PRESIDENT FREITAS DO
AMARAL HAS AUTHORIZED CDS MILITANTS TO PARTICIPATE IN SUCH
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CABINET AS INDIVIDUAL, NOT AS PARTY REPRESENTATIVES. THE SOCIAL-
ISTS SHOW NO SIGN OF SOFTENING THEIR POSITION. END SUMMARY.

1. NOBRE DA COSTA PUSHES AHEAD:
THE PRIME MINISTER-DESIGNATE CONTINUED HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH
THE POLITICAL PARTIES AUGUST 14-15 AND BEGAN CONSULTATIONS
WITH CGTP-INTERSINDICAL AUGUST 16. THE SOCIALISTS

HAVE REFUSED TO RECONSIDER THEIR UNWILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE IN A NOBRE DA COSTA CABINET AS REPORTED REFTTEL, BUT THE PRIME MINISTER-DESIGNATE HAS EMPHASIZED THAT HE WILL PROCEED TO FORM A THIRD CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT CABINET WITH OR WITHOUT SOCIALIST PARTY PARTICIPATION. HE MAY ANNOUNCE SOME OF HIS CABINET CHOICES AUGUST 17.

2. CDS RECONSIDERS:

MEANWHILE, CDS PRESIDENT FREITAS DO AMARAL HAS REVERSED HIS PREVIOUS POSITION AND HAS AUTHORIZED CDS MILITANTS TO PARTICIPATE AS INDIVIDUALS IN A NEW CABINET REGARDLESS OF THE SOCIALISTS POSITION. HE PUBLICLY CRITICIZED MARIO SOARES FOR THE "POLITICAL ABSURDNESS" OF THE INTRANSIGENT SOCIALIST PARTY REACTION TO NOBRE DA COSTA'S EFFORTS TO FORM A NEW GOVERNMENT.

3. LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY PLANS:

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY PRESIDENT VASCO DA GAMA FERNANDES (SOCIALIST) HAS CONVENED THE ASSEMBLY'S PERMANENT COMMISSION TO MEET AUGUST 17 TO DISCUSS PLANS FOR AN EXTRAORDINARY ASSEMBLY SESSION. THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY IS SCHEDULED TO RECONVENE ROUTINELY OCTOBER 15, BUT WOULD HAVE TO SIT IN SPECIAL SESSION FOR CONSIDERATION OF A NEW GOVERNMENT PROGRAM IF NOBRE DA COSTA'S EFFORTS SUCCEED.

4. COMMENT:

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NOBRE DA COSTA HAS IMPLICITLY DISMISSED RUMORS THAT HE WOULD BE UNABLE TO FORM A CABINET IN THE FACE OF SOCIALIST OPPOSITION. PSD AND CDS MEMBERS ARE NOW FREE TO JOIN A NEW CABINET AS INDIVIDUALS BUT NOT PARTY REPRESENTATIVES. PS INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY RUI MATEUS TOLD EMBOFF AUGUST 15 THAT THE PRICE FOR SOCIALIST PARTICIPATION IN THE CABINET IS 10 OF 15 MINISTRIES. THE SOCIALISTS SHOW NO SIGNS OF RETRATING FROM THEIR POSITION. ACCORDING TO MATEUS, SOARES IS INTENT ON REDUCING WHAT HE CONSIDERS THE PRESIDENT'S INCREASED INVOLVEMENT IN THE GOVERNMENT AND HIS TENDENCY TOWARD PRESIDENTIALISM. THAT ATTITUDE WILL CONTINUE TO UNDERMINE THE EFFECTIVENESS AND DURABILITY OF ANY GOVERNMENT NOT PREDICATED ON SOCIALIST SUPPORT.
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